

**REPORT OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE
CONCERNING THE APPLICATION FROM THE
HUSSON COLLEGE
TO ADD THE MASTER OF SCHOOL COUNSELING DEGREE
TO ITS EXISTING STATE APPROVED
EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

**May 30, 2008
Bangor, Maine**

The Husson College Review Team

=====

Dr. Susan Hillman- Chair
Associate Professor
Department of Education
University of New England

Shelley Reed
School Counseling Consultant
Maine Department of Education

*Ann Weisleder
Observer
Maine State Board of Education

*Harry W. Osgood
Higher Education Specialist
Maine Department of Education

* Non-Voting Participants

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the State of Maine Education Statute Title 20A, and state policies 05-071-Chapter 114 setting forth Maine State Board of Education procedures and standards relating to the review and approval of educator preparation programs, an application was received from the Husson College Department of Education to add a graduate program to its existing State approved programs. When such requests are made, Chapter 114, §3.10, a) stipulates that “. . . the unit shall provide documentation that the new program demonstrates compliance with Subsection 2 (Standard 2.1 – Initial Teacher Candidate Performance, Standard 2.3 – Field Experiences and Clinical Practice, Standard 2.5 – Faculty Qualifications, Performance and Development, and Standard 2.6 – Unit Governance and Resources) with respect to each endorsement and/or certificate as to which approval is sought. Evidence of compliance shall be reviewed by the Department liaison person rather than by a visitation team as provided in section 3.2 of this rule. However, the Department liaison person, with assistance of such additional personnel as are required, may visit the unit to review the evidence submitted.” A visiting team comprised of Dr. Susan Hillman, Associate Professor, Department of Education, University of New England; Shelley Reed, School Counseling Consultant, Maine Department of Education; Ann Weisleder, Observer, Maine State Board of Education; and Harry Osgood, Higher Education Specialist, Maine Department of Education met with the applicant on May 30, 2008 in Bangor, Maine.

The program under review is the Master of Science in School Counseling comprised of a 36 credit-hour plan of study of which 7 courses are shared with Counseling Psychology. The standards identified by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), and the Maine School Counseling Model were used to inform the development of this Husson program. This program is developed to include candidates who may not wish to become a K-12 school counselor, but may desire to focus on a college setting, for instance. Therefore, while this program leads to a master's, it does not by itself lead to Maine certification as a school counselor. To obtain a Maine school counselor license, a candidate must meet the additional requirements of (1) receiving passing scores on the Praxis II School Guidance and Counseling exam, (2) a course in exceptionalities, (3) a background check and fingerprinting, which are not a required part of the program. These additional requirements are clearly disclosed and noted in all college documents and admission materials.

The mission of Husson College to serve rural communities led them to develop the program with two sites in addition to the Bangor campus—namely, Presque Isle and Calais. Classes are delivered synchronously utilizing ICV, a web-based video conferencing format; and faculty, although not required, often rotate among the sites so that the students receive direct contact with the instructor. Students can enroll part-time with the possibility of completing the program within 3 years.

The Review Team reports its findings on each of the four (4) standards below.

Standard 2.1 – Initial Teacher Candidate Performance

Candidates for the School Counseling Program are well prepared in theory, practice, program development, and the ability to demonstrate leadership skills. The 36 credit-hour school counseling program is comprised of coursework, field experience and an internship experience. Coursework spans two departments—Counseling Psychology that is housed in the School of Sciences and Humanities and School Counseling, which falls within the School of Education. A listing of program courses and their syllabi and discussions with faculty indicate that this collaboration produces students versed in content and site specific practice.

Coursework is grounded in professional standards including the eight common core areas of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and the Standards for School Counseling established by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) as evidenced in alignment sheets, even though the 36 credit-hours fall short of the recommended 48 by CACREP. However, Husson College plans on expanding the program requirements eventually to 48 credits hours, so CACREP accreditation can be achieved, and we would concur with this plan.

A review of materials used in the program show that the students are prepared to develop school counseling programs which are aligned with the Maine Comprehensive Developmental School Counseling Model and will enable graduating students to become leaders in program design even as new counselors.

The use of technology is central to the delivery of the program enabling for flexibility and a reach into rural areas of Maine. The college is working to use multiple modes of technology and train personnel in engaging content delivery, which will demonstrate appropriate uses to students in the program.

Evidence of admission standards for the program such as candidate application documents, applicant interview form, and the program requirement sheet demonstrated a commitment to enrolling students with the requirements and aptitude to be a successful school counselor.

Upon completion of the program, an evaluation is conducted where students must show they have completed the candidacy requirements, completed fieldwork and a 300 hour internship or a 600 hour internship if the candidate has no previous school site experience, and a GPA of 3.0 or better on coursework. A Professional School Counselor Portfolio is a requirement and is a vehicle for evaluation, reflection and exemplars of their work mastery.

Beyond the program elements, as previously mentioned, students desiring certification in Maine must demonstrate passing scores on the Praxis II School Guidance and Counseling

exam, take a course in exceptionalities, have a background check and fingerprinting. The need for these additional requirements is cited in student application materials.

This standard is met.

Standard 2.3 – Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The Master of Science in School Counseling Program and its school site partners coordinate to design, implement and evaluate field and internship experiences, which prepare candidates to develop and practice skills to assist students with academic, career and personal/social development. Candidates submit an application to secure placements with certified school counselors. The applications are reviewed by the program coordinator and cooperating schools to ensure the best placement arrangement taking into consideration also commuting distances and release time for those candidates who are already employed by school districts. The Field Experience and Internship are of significant length and supervision to afford candidates a viable practical experience.

The Field Experience includes 120 hours including a minimum of 30 hours of supervised individual counseling practicum. A site coordinator, who is a certified school counselor, guides the field experience. Students also attend a weekly class, which facilitates discussion of the current experience and provides for reflection and research on counseling topics.

The Internship includes 300 hours with a minimum of 10 hours of group counseling. 40% of the internship must be in direct service. Students without two years of school-site or counseling experience are required to complete 600 hours of internship. Site supervision is provided by a certified school counselor. During the internship students attend a seminar that provides practice reelection, group supervision, and discussions on such topics as legal and ethical dilemmas. The seminar is guided by the *Internship Handbook* and *A Field Experience Handbook*. Students who have completed their internship commented that the program encouraged them to try multiple student age level placements including placements out of the students' comfort zone, which they found ultimately rewarding and enriching to their experience. During the review team's discussion with candidates, they enthusiastically shared a few of their internship experiences having participated in career fairs, individual, group, and classroom counseling. Candidates are expected to use the same information technology that is currently available in Maine school systems and, in rural areas with limited availability, to bring new technology with them. Candidates spoke reflectively of the need for both theory and practice for thorough school counseling development.

Candidates are encouraged to engage with members of the school counseling profession through attendance at conferences and association membership in Maine School Counselor Association and Maine Counseling Association.

The Program Coordinator reviews student expectations with each site supervisor. Mid- and final assessments then are completed by the site supervisor and the candidate.

The Internship is evaluated by the site supervisor and the course instructor. The college supervisor visits each intern and site supervisor at least once during the semester. The Intern maintains a log of activities, builds a portfolio, and completes a self-assessment. A tangible product is left at the site at the conclusion of the Internship.

A meeting with the Advisory Committee, which included Site Supervisors brought up a recommendation for continuing development concerning the Field Experience and Internship. Site Supervisor training would be enhanced by providing supervisors with a greater understanding of the coursework that candidates have participated in at Husson previous to their site work.

Strengths of the program cited by Site supervisors were that they felt that their interns were generally well prepared, and that in fact the interns demonstrated leadership skills by bringing information about current professional direction, made suggestions to the site, and had practice in developing a program based on the ASCA/Maine model of comprehensive K-12 school counseling programs.

This standard is met.

Standard 2.5 – Faculty Qualifications, Performance and Clinical Practice

The School Counseling program is staffed by one full-time faculty who also serves as the Program Coordinator. Nine other instructors teach courses within the School Counseling program, but this includes the courses that rest within the Counseling Psychology Program. Hence three of the nine have full-time appointments in the School of Sciences and Humanities. The remaining six are adjuncts. Overall, eighty percent of the teaching faculty have earned terminal degrees; one is projected to have the doctorate completed in August, and one adjunct is degreed at the master's level. Three of the faculty are in doctoral programs; two are All But Dissertation (ABD) and presently in the dissertation phase and one is within one semester of completion of the doctoral coursework. Their qualifications reflect strong knowledge in the area of counseling, extensive as well as current professional experience, and active engagement in research and other types of scholarly activity such as presentations. In the student interviews, the faculty members are held in strong regard, substantiating the assessment that faculty members are not only active in their profession, they are also able to transmit this knowledge and skills to their students.

The workload for full-time faculty is 12 credit hours per semester, which is equal to 4 courses. Conventionally, this workload would be viewed as high for graduate school faculty members. However, at Husson most faculty members teach a combination of undergraduate and graduate classes, and promotion and tenure is not tied to research but excellence in teaching and service. Given this context, the workload seems justified, but as a side note, the team would commend the faculty members for their active engagement in research given their 12-credit teaching workload. The Program Coordinator is relieved

of 2 courses this past year—one course release was for coordinating the program and the second course release was to write the program report. As enrollment increases and hence administrative duties augment, a determination of additional workload release should be considered for the Program Coordinator.

Since the delivery of the School Counseling Program is on-line, specific technological skills are required of the instructors. Technology support has been forthcoming to train these instructors; however in the future, the Program has decided that these technological skills will be identified on all adjunct contracts so expectations will be clear. The team supports and applauds Husson for recognizing this need.

This standard is met.

Standard 2.6 – Unit Governance and Resources

The School Counseling Program is housed in the School of Education; yet, seven of the required courses emanate from the Counseling Psychology Program, which falls under the School of Science and Humanities. Officially, the Dean of the School of Education is responsible for the program, but frequent meetings between the Deans was reported to ensure continuity and collaboration in developing a coherent School Counseling Program. In addition, the Program Coordinators of the School Counseling Program and the Counseling Psychology Program have been meeting mostly bi-weekly to work out details. As the two directors concurred, “We may not have anticipated problems, but once an issue arose we handled it.” This collaborative spirit has supported the program’s development. Wherein governance could have been problematic spanning Schools as well as programs, it appears not to be.

An external Advisory Board has been formed to provide feedback and support to the School Counseling Program. Sixteen members comprise the Board including two current students and numerous area school counselors. As evident by the minutes of the meetings, the Advisory Board is an instrumental in offering their expertise to improve the program.

Evidence of professional journals and books including digital materials and on-line databases in the area of school counseling was found in the library holdings. Students at all sites felt that they had adequate library support with one student in Calais sharing a story in which a book was mailed to him and received within 24 hours. Students, too, are asked for their input on library acquisitions. Recently, though, \$2250 of library requests were deferred. With such a new program, we would encourage Husson College to support the need to build and maintain resources, especially since the enrollment has grown so significantly which will tax the current resources that were based on a smaller expected enrollment. This leads into another resource and that is the fact that the program has only one full-time faculty member and shares an administrative assistant and part-time work-study student with the Dean and all other programs in the School of Education. Since the enrollment has grown much faster than anticipated, it would appear new faculty positions and administrative staff will need to be considered. We realize that

this issue is already being reviewed by the administration and we would encourage a close examination given the number of students involved in the program.

In all other ways, funding has been equitable and supportive of the School Counseling Program. In particular, although the ICV courses have been offered at Husson College for 10 years, education was new to this delivery. Once education ICV courses began to be offered, requirements for more interactive involvement of students became important. The college has been extremely supportive of investing technological infrastructure costs to ensure the pedagogically sound delivery of courses.

This standard is met.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Visiting Committee finds that all standards have been met.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE MAINE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Visiting Committee recommends approval of the School Counseling Program at Husson College. This program will be reconsidered, along with all other unit programs, during the College's fall 2008 State site visit.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

INTERVIEWS

Administration:

Dr. William Beardsley, President
 Dr. Rick Stephens, Chief Academic Officer
 Dr. Julian Haynes, Husson Fellow
 Dr. Frank Hubbard, Dean – Science and Humanities
 Lynne Coy-Ogan, Dean – School of Education
 Craig Hadley, Chief Financial Officer
 Kevin Casey, Director of Information Resources

Faculty:

Dr. Deborah Drew
 Dr. Carol Sherman

Students:

Bangor

April Clockedile

Brittany Ray

Unobskey/Calais

Charlene Barnard

Janice Rice

Doug Richardson

Presque Isle

Carolyn Dorsey

Travis Dupero

Kerry Gordon

Tracy Corbin

Melissa Thompson

Advisory Board Members:

Bangor

Carlena Bean

Lisa Erhardt

Beverly Homich

Ellen Smith

Jeri Stevens

Presque Isle

Marty Gallant

By phone

Bernadette Willette

Elena Perrello

Field Supervisors:

Frank Donaldson – Bangor

Cara Cirillo – Unobskey

DOCUMENTS

Mission Statements

Husson College
School of Education
School Counseling Program

Master of Science in School Counseling Website: http://www.husson.edu/?cat_id=1005

Graduate admission requirements and application: http://www.husson.edu/?cat_id=1006

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP) website
<http://www.cacrep.org/>

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) website <http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>

Application documents and sample acceptance letters

Applicant interview form
Acceptance letter (300 hour internship)
Acceptance letter (600 hour internship)

Program requirements sheet

CACREP standards alignment charts
General standards/School Counseling standards

ASCA School Counselor Competencies alignment chart

School Counseling assessment chart

Field Experience Handbook and Internship Handbook: http://www.husson.edu/?cat_id=1223

Candidacy documents

Application for Candidacy
Candidacy review sheet
Letter of admission to Candidacy

Course syllabi

Textbooks for classes, in particular,

Introduction to type and careers
The fundamentals of college admission counseling
School counselors as educational leaders
The ASCA national model
JAK counseling program
Media madness

Portfolio Requirements

MS in School Counseling Student Handbook at http://www.husson.edu/?cat_id=1223

Samples of student work including student-developed and produced guidance program pamphlets, units of study, papers, weekly journal entries, and portfolios

Slideshow of pictures of classes, internship experiences and graduation

Student course evaluations

Program Coordinator and Faculty vitae including the internship and field experience supervisors

Dr. Drew's research grant award letter

Minutes of meeting with Counseling Psychology department

Advisory Board documents including agenda and minutes

List of faculty development workshops

Faculty Handbook

Faculty Search materials for Psychology and Counseling Psychology

Sample adjunct contract

School of Education faculty meeting minutes

School of Education Budget 2007-2008

School Counseling Budget Request

School of Education Capital Budget 2008-2009

Library purchases and requests, journal holdings in the library

Husson organizational chart

School of Education Financial Analysis